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The American Numismatic and Archaeological Society of New York.

Founded 1857—Incorporated 1865.

CIRCULAR TO MEMBERS.

THE Society desiring to collect and preserve materials in order to enable the Historiographer to prepare and read before it, upon the demise of any member, a memorial of his life, these queries are forwarded to you with the earnest request that they may be answered *in extenso*, and returned without delay.

QUESTIONS.

1. What is your full name? *Answer. Gates Phillips Thruston.*
2. What were the names of your parents? *A. Robt A. T & M A. T. Lawyers.*
3. What were the names of your grandparents? *A. Judge Buckner T. Lawyer. 2^d Senator from Ky U.S. Senate & Horatio G. Phillips } Judge U.S. Court capitalist.*
4. When and where were you born? *A.*
5. If you are married, give the maiden name of your wife, and her residence, the names of her parents, the date of your marriage, and the place where you were married? *A. Married at Nashville Dec 21 65 to Miss Ida Hamilton. & Nashville Tenn Daughter of J. M. Hamilton Esq.*
6. If you have had any children, give their names in the order of their birth. *A. One child G. P. T. Jr 18 mos old!*

7. If any member of your family is deceased, give the name and date of death. A. *one daughter (Louise)*

8. State where you were brought up and educated. A. *Dayton OH 10*

9. If you were graduated by any college, give the name and class. A.

*Miami University, State Institution Ohio
Valedictorian of class of 1855.*

10. State what degrees, if any, have been conferred, and by whom. A. *"AB" am.*

11. State your occupation; and if you are a member of any of the learned professions. A.

*Retired Lawyer.
Now President of State Insurance Co. of Tenn.*

12. If you have held any public office, either Municipal, State or Federal, state what, when, and for how long. A. *Various minor offices*

also Bot Brig Genl U.S Vols in late war

13. If you have been connected with any corporations, or other societies, state in what manner. A. *Presdt State Ins Co.*

*Vice President Cole Industrial School
" " Citizens Reform Assn
" " Nashville Art Assn.*

14. If you have written any book, pamphlet or article which has been printed, state when and where published, and give titles in full, and please furnish copies to the Library of the Society. A. *a number*

*one. "Theories of arts first settlement of America"
Published in magazine of History
one on Mummamatics. Published in N.Y.
Journal of Mummamatics
of Boston*

THE SINEWS OF BATTLE SAVED BY THE GALLANTRY OF GATES P. THRUSTON.

CAPT. E. E. WINTERS TELLS THE TALE.

How one event begets or suggests another. Looking through documents to confirm, or set aside, my personal recollections of the Little Battle of Laverne, the Bunker-Hill battle of the South, I came across the following telegram sent by General Rosecrans to the War Department about a month or so subsequent to the hard-fought struggle of Murfreesboro or "Stone-River":

[BY TELEGRAM.]

HEADQUARTERS, DEPT. OF THE CUMBERLAND, }
MURFREESBORO, TENN., Feb. 13, 1863. }

To Brig.-General L. Thomas, Adj. General, U. S. A., Washington, D. C.

Please have Captain G. P. Thruston, First Ohio Volunteer Infantry, appointed my senior aid-de-camp, with the rank of Major. His gallantry saved the Ammunition Train of the Right Wing at the Battle of Stone River.

W. S. ROSECRANS, Major General commanding.

OFFICIAL. Henry Stone, A. A. A. G.

When I read this, I was enabled by a little effort to recall to mind the circumstances which occasioned the then commanding general of the army to mete out to an officer of quite inferior rank so distinguished a medallion of praise, accompanied by such a flattering promotion from a captaincy of infantry volunteers to be his senior aid. And when I identified the G. P. Thruston of this army telegram as being General Gates P. Thruston, the distinguished lawyer and the cultured citizen of Nashville, my interest was the more aroused to look up the details of the "gallant" achievement worthy of such special mention by his general.

When, at gray dawn on the morning of the 31st of December, 1862, the right wing of Rosecrans' army, under the immediate command of Major General Alex. McD. McCook, was attacked and its too extended and comparatively thin lines were routed by the sudden and overpowering advance of Gen. Hardee's left of Bragg's rebel forces, it so happened that Gates P. Thruston, captain of the First Ohio Infantry, was the Ordinance Officer in charge of McCook's Ammunition Train, consisting of 79 wagons, guarded by two companies of volunteer infantry.

Its position was near to the Wilkinson pike in the rear of the center of McCook's lines.

Captain Thruston was that morning in the saddle and his men and wagons ready for motion, as early as the first streaks of dawning light made gray the horizon.

It was not long after this that the rebel rush upon the Right Wing took place and the recoil upon him of the stamped fugitives of the Union army made it too evident there had been a serious disaster, which fact was soon confirmed by the appearance of the rebel cavalry swarming in the rear.

To retreat with his extended charge of 79 wagons down the turnpike was inevitably to give them a prey to the rebel horse, and deprive the rest of the army still intact of the sinews of battle which they contained.

With that prompt decision which is the intuition of genius he concluded to take his Train across the country, by no established road, to the rear of the unbroken force of the army, and he finally found himself and his charge near the Murfreesboro pike, within easy reach of the Left Wing commanded by Major General T. L. Crittenden, and not over four hundred yards from General Rosecrans' headquarters—the whole distance traversed from his starting point near the Wilkinson pike being quite three miles.

He cut his way with axes through cedar woods, crossed gullies, mounted hills, descended through valleys, forded Stewart's Creek three times, and by about noon reached his objective point with his important trust intact.

But he had to fight for it. His pathway was not without

trials and thorns. The rebel horsemen, as if scenting the importance of his Train, three times attacked and captured his wagons, but each time he succeeded in rescuing them without damage, by brave countercharges, cavalry and stragglers aiding him; though, alas, on recovering the teams it was found that his darkey teamsters had been killed in cold blood, which seems to have been part of the rebel policy at that time; and Captain Thruston was therefore compelled to replace them with his white soldiers as drivers.

Upon reaching his point of rest and safety near the Murfreesboro pike, Capt. Thruston met Capt. Thompson of General Rosecrans' staff, and told him to inform the General that the Ammunition Train of the Right Wing had been brought by him across the country in safety, and was at the command of the army, then and there.

The staff officer, excited by the important and quite unexpected news, hastened to tell the commander the surprising intelligence; for all at headquarters had, until then, given up the Ammunition Train as lost in the disaster to the Right Wing, believing it to have been gobbled up by the hordes of rebel riders in the rear.

It was not long after Captain Thruston had informed the staff officer of the facts, when Gen. Rosecrans with his staff and escort, dashed down to where he was standing, and hurriedly and excitedly interrogated: "Where is the man who said the Ammunition Train was saved?" Captain Thruston spoke promptly up, but in a quiet tone: "I am the man." "Who are you?" "G. P. Thruston, 1st Ohio Volunteer Infantry." "Had you charge of the train and guard?" "I had, sir." "What is your rank?" "Captain." "Well, sir, consider yourself promoted for gallantry to the rank of Major, from this date."

The vital importance of this determined action of Ordinance Officer Thruston to the whole army, may be estimated from these curt excited utterances of the commanding general. The telegram to the War Department which I quoted at the commencement of this article, shows, that Rosecrans in his cooler moments did not forget to confirm his judgment of the battle-field.

But I find also on the record the following, by which it is clear that General McCook was even more deeply impressed by Capt. Thruston's action. I extract from the text of the "History of Rosecrans' Campaign, being a Narrative of personal observations, with an Appendix consisting of official reports of The Battle of Stone River, by W. D. Bickham, correspondent of the Cincinnati Commercial," published in 1863. On page 243 of this book it is stated:

"The rebel cavalry were swarming on the right, on the left, and in the rear. On the left they attacked a train and slaughtered some stragglers. On the right they charged on McCook's ordinance train; but it was twice rescued through the gallantry and address of his Ordinance officer, Captain Gates P. Thruston, who subsequently for his good conduct in that sanguinary battle (of Stone river) was promoted to the conspicuous position of Chief-of-Staff of the 20th army corps, with the rank of lieutenant colonel."

From which it appears that McCook "saw" General Rosecrans' Major promotion of the gallant Thruston, and went him a Lieutenant Colonel "better."

It may be mentioned that both the major and the lieutenant colonel commissions reached Captain Thruston from Washington by the same mail.

General Rosecrans in his official report of the battle of Stone river, says:

"The Ammunition Train of the Right Wing endangered by its sudden discomfiture, was taken charge of by Captain Thruston, of the First Ohio regiment, an Ordinance officer, who, by his energy and gallantry, aided by a charge of cavalry, and such troops as he could pick up, carried it through the woods to the

Murfreesboro pike, around to the rear of the Left Wing, thus enabling the troops of Sheridan's division to replenish their empty cartridge boxes."

Besides this complimentary mention of Captain Thruston by the commanding general himself, contained in the main body of his report, he also has this farther reference to the matter, under the heading of "Names especially mentioned for important service in the Battle of Stone River":

"STAFF OF MAJOR GENERAL MCCOOK—Captain Gates P. Thruston, First Ohio, specially mentioned by Major General McCook, and others, for particular acts of gallantry, skill and good conduct. He is mentioned by Generals Negley, Johnson, Davis, Sheridan and Carlin."

From all of which I am moved to remark, that I think Gen. Gates P. Thruston's posterity need not be ashamed of their ancestor's battle record.

WASHINGTON G. A. R. NOTES.

At the National Capital now, is the busy season. With the active charity duties entailed upon the various Posts of the Department of the Potomac, from the inclement rainy season and discharges of old soldiers from Department clerkships—which has been freely done, much as it may have been denied, notwithstanding and in the face of the law protecting such cases—comes the annual election of Post officials, with the preparation for Department Encampments in February, when the Department officials are elected.

Appended is an official list of Department Encampments, as far as are yet received at National headquarters:

Jan. 21st, Dept. of Vermont, City Hall, Burlington.

Jan. 21st, Dept. of Rhode Island, at Providence.

Jan. 22nd, Dept. of Florida, at Eustis.

Jan. 27th and 28th, Dept. of Connecticut.

Jan. 27th and 28th, Dept. of Massachusetts, Boston.

Feb. 3rd and 4th, Dept. Wisconsin, Milwaukee.

Feb. 9th, Dept. of Pennsylvania, Scranton.

Feb. 10th, Dept. of Maine, Skowhegan.

Feb. 11th, Dept. of New Jersey, Trenton.

Feb. 12th, Dept. of Delaware, Wilmington.

Feb. 17th, Dept. of Illinois, Springfield.

Feb. 17th, Dept. of Nebraska, Red Cloud.

Feb. 17th, Dept. of New Hampshire, Dover.

Feb. 17th and 18th, Dept. of Indiana, Indianapolis.

Feb. 17th and 18th, Dept. of Missouri, Mexico.

Feb. 18th, 19th and 20th, Dept. of California, Sacramento.

April 21st, Dept. of New York, New York City.

Twenty new Posts have been organized in California the past year. Six Posts in Arizona signify a wish to be retained in the California Department, and who blames them with such a record of thrift and energy as this represents. Commander Warfield is a live comrade as this record also conclusively shows. He reports the W. R. C. in equally flourishing condition. They fear not to rid themselves of barnacles, too, as reports show, at Tucson, Pima county, A. T., Comrade James F. Toplier, was dishonorably discharged from Post Negley, and dismissed from the Grand Army of the Republic. Also comrade A. W. Hanna dishonorably dismissed from Col. Whipple Post, and dismissed from the Grand Army of the Republic.

Sufficient funds of the per capita contributions to the Grant Memorial G. A. R. monument have already been received to assure the movement no longer an uncertainty. It is now an established fact, and will be so reported officially very soon. This promptness is far beyond expectation and shows deep interest the old "vets" feel in this particular work. But little more is required, and that promptly done, in this collection, then the work of construction can commence at once; a work that will be a credit to the G. A. R., and a lasting testimonial to the

memory of a distinguished comrade and great leader and hero of the age, U. S. Grant; so erected at the Nation's Capital he did so much to save.

In the session of Congress before the holiday recess, were several pension bills presented; each for relief of some one class; but there is a bill prepared, which is to cover all, and may be termed a general legislative bill. It reorganizes the entire practical system of pension office and grants pensions as follows:

From date of disability or discharge from the service. To female nurses of the late war; to the Reserve Marine service. It also stops the government from declaring a man unsound at time of enlistment, with certain exceptions. It abolishes all rank and gives a pension according to the degree of disability. It establishes all rates by law instead of by rulings of the office, and it now exists. It will increase a majority of the disease, slight wound, and injury cases. It grants pensions to dependent widows at twelve dollars and children at five dollars per month, without requiring proof that the death cause of the soldier was due to the service. It has a service pension for all disabled soldiers, if their disability was received without their fault, no matter where received, and in prisoners of war. It forbids officers to make inquiries about your claim without your knowledge. It forbids the taking of secret evidence in any form. If your claim has been rejected from any improper cause it requires a reopening and allows you to meet anything adverse. It appoints new men to adjust rejected claims, defines by law all technical terms used in the office and gives them a common-sense interpretation. It relieves you of many burdens now imposed in what is termed "red-tape," and is the most liberal of any bill ever written. There is not a class disabled or in want that is not provided for, including widows and minor children of deceased soldiers, and if husband or father had a claim pending or rejected when he died, his widow and children without regard to their re-marriage or age, are subrogated to all the rights he would have if living. It also relieves the prisoners of war from the strict rules of proof.

Comrade Whitten, of Union City, Indiana, has worked on this bill for over six months to perfect it and is sent here as a manager of its legislation with commission from the Union Veteran Army, which is more of a political organization than the Grand Army in that it fights for preference of veterans for employment everywhere, ignoring politics for duty in self-protection and self-support. Mr. Whitten has the co-operation of his comrades of the G. A. R. also, so far as the regulations will admit of legislative political work.

We will follow up these matter; report the progress of such a beneficent measure as this seems to be. There is no buncombe to be tacked to this legislation, and is a philanthropic work on the part of the comrade mentioned.

E. B. S.

At one time General A. J. Smith, of the army of the Tennessee, took it into his head to order that the wagons, etc., belonging to the different regiments of his command should have painted on them some emblem or insignia, by which each regiment could distinguish its own. The colonel of one of these regiments, a hard one, came to the general and said that his regiment had not adopted any badge, he hoped the general would be kind enough to suggest one. The general promptly complied by saying; "If I were going to paint your wagons, and was anxious that there should be no doubt to which regiment they belonged, the emblem I should select would be—a soldier charging a hog!"

In England they tell how Sankey walking up to a grenadier, and taking him affectionately by the belt said: "Young man, I likewise am a soldier—a soldier of heaven." "Old'un," returned the grenadier, "You're a long way from your barracks anyhow."

15. If any biographical sketch of you or history of your family has been printed, please refer to it? A. *Biography of Thurston Branch. Howes Hist. Virginia*
" *maternal line Dickinson in Hist. of Elizabeth N.Y.*

16. Give in detail any incidents which have gone to make up the history of your life; acquaintance with distinguished men, etc.; in fact, everything that should be presented in a memorial of your life. A.

*Valedictorian of class at college
Capt. 1st Ohio volunteer Infantry Civil War.
Major & a. a. g. volunteers Staff department
& Senior aide Maj Genl Rosecrans
Lieut Col & a. a. g. & Chief of Staff 20th Army Corps
Brevetted for special acts of Gallantry Stones River &
acting Judge advocate of Army of Cumberland for 2 years
Staff of Maj Genl Geo. H. Thomas
Brevetted Brig Genl on recommendation of Genl Thomas*

17. If any of your ancestors or descendants have held important positions of honor or trust, please give details. A.

*Grandfather Buckner Thurston. 2^d Senator U.S. Senate from Ky
also Judge U.S. Court Dist Columbia
Johnathan Dickinson 1st President of Princeton for 36 years
college ancestor on mother's side*

18. If you can give the name of the first ancestor of the family in this country, please do so. A. *Edward Thurston of Bristol England came to Virginia in Oct 1666. We have original record of family history The entries in which were begun in 1604. & kept up till present time without missing a link or generation
Pres. Dickinson grandfather landed in Mass in 1640.*

NOTE.—Please also send to the Society, for its Album, a photographic likeness of yourself, with your autograph beneath it, if you have not already done so; and donations of anything you may have written will be particularly acceptable, as well as contributions germane to its Library and Cabinets.

Item of interest in print appended.

Signature —

G. P. Thurston.

HISTORIOGRAPHER,

Nashville

Tenn.

American Numismatic and Archeological Society,

Room 25, N. Y. University Building, Washington Square, New York City.

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Am N + A Society
N.Y.

Sketch of life of
Gen^e G. P. Thurston

Cor Member.
